



Motorola presents their Community Policing Awards for 2006 during the annual ACCP Convention

Aruba has been host to the Annual General Meeting Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP), which began on Thursday, May 25 with a welcome reception in the Fort Zoutman in Oranjestad. Established in 1987, the ACCP currently comprises the Commissioners of Police from 24 Caribbean Countries. The purpose of the association is to promote collaboration and co-operation in the development and implementation of policing strategies, systems, and procedures in the region. In addition, they encourage the development of professional and technical skills of police officers throughout the region, and proactive measure to prevent crime and improve police/community relations.

For the past five years, the ACCP and the Motorola Corporation has jointly sponsored a Community Policing Award Initiative in two categories, for police forces that number less than one thousand and for those numbering over 1000 officers on staff. Last year, Aruba's Police Force received first prize in the category one competition for the initiative of the Aruba Hospitality & Security Foundation Visibility Team; a model of how a public and private industry partnership can improve protection for the community.

On Tuesday, May 30, Mr. John McGee, representing Motorola, along with ACCP President Mr. Paul Farquharson of the Bahamas announced the winning departments for this years competition. Joining them on dais to announce the winners was Keith Renaud of the Bahamas, where next year's ACCP meeting will take place, and the commissioners from the winning countries, Mr. Trevor Paul of Trinidad and Tobago and Mr. Gerald Wesby of Belize.

The first place winners of the 2006 Community Policing Awards for forces fewer than 1000 police was Belize with the project titled "Yarba Citizens Development Committee Project." Accepting the award was the Lead Police Officer, ACP Crispin Jeffries, and Lead Community Member Ms. Elizabeth Longsworth along with Mr. Nuri Mohammad. As explained by ACP Jeffries the Yarba Citizens Project was instigated in a part of Belize City by mothers that have been losing children to crime and gang violence. When the project was initiated the violent death rate in the area was alarming, accounting for 50% of the crime related deaths in the entire country of Belize. Since the implementation of the Yarba Citizens Project, the area had seen only one killing in a nine-month period, which is a drastic and positive result.

First Prize winner in the category of police forces with a staff of over 1000 was "The Cross, the Star and the People Project" of Trinidad-Tobago lead by Police Officer ASP Earl Jackson and Community Leader Father Jason Gordon. Accepting the award along with ASP Earl Jackson on behalf of Father Gordon was Deputy CEO Port au Spain Corporation Winifred David.

The objective of the Motorola Community Policing Award is to serve as a catalyst for police officers to embrace the philosophy of Community Policing and encourage members of the community to work with the police to prevent crime and improve the quality of community life. In addition, projects should highlight the major benefits that can be derived from the implementation of the Community Policing Concept. These projects help promote the concept of "partnership" as an indispensable element of Community Policing, and provide an incentive for corporate and community organizations to actively participate in Community Policing Initiatives. All winners received their trip to Aruba as part of their prize, and a crystal obelisk award etched with the Community Policing Award Logo and recognition from the ACCP and Motorola.

The ACCP and Motorola assert that this award initiative is a positive step in the right direction. Policing in the region will derive tremendous benefits if it is sustained. Motorola and the ACCP are extremely happy to take the lead in building alliances to assist in attaining the goal of improving the quality of community life in the region.